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NRO 25X1A

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IDEALIST

6 May 1965 NRO 25X1A

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NRO DECLASSIFICATION/RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS ON FILE

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy for Field Activities, OSA
Chief, Security Staff, OSA

SUBJECT: IDEALIST Mission Plan Proliferation

REFERENCE: COMOR Minutes, dated 29 April 1965
NRO 25X1A [redacted]

1. I know that, together, we all share a serious concern over the general trend of the last two years wherein mission plan information has been necessarily passed to an ever growing circle of people in Washington and elsewhere who have become involved in the approval process for overhead reconnaissance missions. While we can deplore this trend, perhaps, there is little we can do to limit the number of people who obtain this information in the course of making the mission go successfully. There are, however, certain areas where I feel foreknowledge of impending missions can be more effectively restricted.

2. I have specific reference to the COMOR Minutes for 29 April, referenced above, as they cover, on page 6, the Operational Briefing for Program B. According to the minutes, [redacted] 25X1A9a reported that: (Item 12. c.) "Mission C245C is scheduled for 30 April 1965 for Formosa Strait area between Foochow and Shanghai. In response to a question [redacted] said that the northern part of the mission was to satisfy a [redacted] requirement. He confirmed that weather continued to be unfavorable for coverage of South China." This, of course, was a mission, which at the time COMOR met, had not been flown and, in fact, as nearly as I can reconstruct, the minutes were in print and perhaps distributed prior to take-off time. According to the minutes there were some twenty-two COMOR members and consultants present, representing the spectrum of agencies and departments interested in the reconnaissance of denied areas. As far

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as I can tell, none of the COMOR members has any operational responsibility for the Idealist Program with, of course, the exception of [REDACTED] 25X1A9a

3. I would, therefore, request that you instruct the Intelligence Division that in making their weekly report to COMOR, extreme care should be taken to confine the reporting to those missions which have already taken place and to avoid, where ever possible, reference to missions which have already been alerted, but have not been executed. Your comments on this matter would be welcome.

25X1A9a

[REDACTED]

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM JR.
Deputy Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

cc: EXO/DDS&T

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